

drought package that will allow many family farmers and ranchers to stay in business through this extensive drought.

Over 23 groups expressed their support for the disaster assistance provisions in the Homeland Security funding bill for fiscal year 2005 at the beginning of this week, including the National Farmers Union, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Soybean Association, and National Association of Wheat Growers, to name a few. Such wide and strong support not only speaks to the number of producers who require assistance, but also to the merit of the provisions accepted in the Senate bill.

Drought is a real disaster and we must treat it as such. I am hopeful that my colleagues in the House realize how important this issue is for our agricultural producers, who are the economic engines of our rural communities and the backbone of our Nation. The Senate passed agricultural disaster assistance in a broad bipartisan manner, and I am hopeful that the House will show their support for America's producers by ensuring agricultural assistance remains at the levels authorized in the Senate bill.

SPINA BIFIDA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of October as Spina Bifida Awareness Month.

Spina bifida is the Nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect. It is a neural tube defect that occurs when the central nervous system does not properly close during the early stages of pregnancy. Each year more than 4,000 pregnancies are affected and of these 1,500 babies are born with spina bifida. The most severe form of spina bifida occurs in 96 percent of children born with this disease. However, thanks to the good work that the Spina Bifida Association of America is carrying out to promote prevention and to enhance the lives of all affected by this condition, substantial progress is being made.

During Spina Bifida Awareness Month, a special effort is made to increase public awareness about spina bifida and its prevention. Simply by taking a daily dose of the B vitamin, folic acid, women of childbearing age have the power to reduce the incidence of spina bifida by up to 75 percent. Recent studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, show that 40 percent of women of childbearing age now report taking a vitamin containing folic acid every day. In addition, since the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, decision to fortify enriched grains with folic acid, CDC has documented a 26 percent decline in these birth defects. These simple changes that produce profound effects clearly demonstrate the importance of awareness.

In addition to educating the public about spina bifida, the Spina Bifida As-

sociation of America also addresses the needs of the spina bifida community. Founded in 1973, the association is the only national organization solely dedicated to advocating on behalf of the spina bifida community. Today, there are approximately 60 chapters serving over 125 communities nationwide.

I am honored to support the Spina Bifida Association and wish to commend them for all of their hard work to prevent and reduce suffering from this birth defect. I greatly appreciate their efforts to improve the lives of those 70,000 individuals living with spina bifida throughout our country. I wish the Spina Bifida Association of America the best of luck in its endeavors and urge all of my colleagues to support the association's efforts.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

KARA SHERIDAN

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Miss Kara Sheridan, the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl White of Ludlowe, KY. Miss Sheridan is a most extraordinary young lady. As I speak, Miss Sheridan is representing the United States of America at the 2004 Paralympic Games. The Paralympic Games are the biggest competition in the world for athletes with a disability.

Miss Sheridan earned the honor of competing in the paralympics through hard work, perseverance and a spirit of hope. I believe that it is these three virtues which have also earned her a right to a place of honor here on the Senate floor and in the hearts of her countrymen. She has risen above the challenges posed by osteogenesis imperfecta, a rare genetic condition that she was born with, and showed the world that perseverance and hope will always be rewarded.

Kara's achievements have come in many different forms throughout the years. They include graduating from Wright State University magna cum laude last year, participating in competitive swimming events, serving on committees through the National Youth with Disabilities Council, and being awarded a scholarship to work on her master's degree from the University of Miami. But the greatest honor that Kara has earned is the accomplishment of a hope so great that it seems nothing can deter her.

Miss Sheridan has shown to America and to the world what it looks like to habitually do the right thing by hoping. Thanks to Miss Sheridan, we have already been reminded of that.●

IN REMEMBRANCE OF COLEEN JARVIS

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is my honor to speak in memory of the late Coleen Jarvis, Vice Mayor of the City of Chico and strong advocate for women, children, and the less fortu-

nate. She will always be remembered for her love of family, politics and the people whom she served so ably.

Coleen Jarvis dedicated her time and energy to improving her community. She fought to improve conditions for women, children, and the homeless. Coleen served as coordinate for the local rape crisis center and worked at Legal Services of Northern California, giving legal aid to those in need. "The community of Chico lost a resourceful, energetic, dedicated and smart leader in the too-soon death of Council Member Coleen Jarvis," said Butte County Supervisor Jane Doaln. "I first met Coleen when she worked on behalf of victims of rape and we continued our friendship and shared work on behalf of our loved community in many venues. Coleen had a deep commitment and worked very hard to improve our community and to remind us of our rightful duty to recognize and resolve the needs of the poor. We all were better representatives due to her efforts. She is sorely missed."

Coleen became an important community leader through her hard work. She was elected to the Chico City Council in 1966, and served almost 8 years. As a council member, she continued to fight for her progressive values. She was passionate about the issues and people she held dear. She was known by her colleagues and friends as a giving person who possessed great integrity, drive, intellect, and wit with an energy and spirit that drove her to fight for what she believed in. Chico Mayor Maureen Kirk reflected, "Coleen was a public servant full of integrity, passion, commitment, empathy, inclusion, tolerance, and intelligence. Her legacy is the Torres Community Homeless Shelter, the first step in her quest to find a solution for homelessness. Coleen will be sorely missed. In her 46 years, she accomplished more than 99 percent of us would accomplish in twice as many years.

Coleen Jarvis committed her life to her family and the world around her. She touched the lives of many, and her impact on her community will be long remembered.●

POLISH DAILY NEWS CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I congratulate the Polish Daily News, Inc., which celebrates its 100th anniversary of publishing the Polish Weekly. On Saturday, October 2, 2004 the Polish community will celebrate this milestone at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy. The Polish Weekly is a wonderful resource for the Polish-American community, providing a wealth of information on local issues as well as news from Poland.

Poles are the second largest immigrant ethnic group in Michigan. They have thrived in communities throughout our State and continue to maintain a strong connection to their rich heritage. Polish immigrants established